

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DANISH ELECTIONS: THE BLACK COALITION

REF: A) COPENHAGEN 0535; B) COPENHAGEN 0349, FEB 7, 1975

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH THE FEB 15 ELECTIONS WILL PROBABLY
PRODUCE A NON-SOCIALIST PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, ANKER
JORGENSEN IS EXPECTED TO RECONSTITUTE HIS SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC
GOVERNMENT. THIS APPARENT ANOMALY IS A DIRECT REFLECTION
OF THE CONTINUING UNACCEPTABILITY OF MOGENS GLISTRUP'S
PROGRESSIVES. FACED WITH A CHOICE, THE "RESPONSIBLE"
PARTIES OF THE CENTER-RIGHT HAVE PREFERRED A SOCIAL
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN CLOSE COLLABORATION
AND IDENTIFICATION WITH GLISTRUP. IN SPITE OF EFFORTS
BY HIM TO ACHIEVE RESPECTABILITY, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT
A "BLACK COLAITION" WITH GLISTRUP WILL OCCUR
SOON. THIS FAILURE IS PROBABLY BOTH IN DANISH
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AND US INTERESTS. END SUMMARY

1. MOST COMMENTATORS FORECAST A RETURN OF THE ANKER
JORGENSEN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AFTER THE
FEBRUARY 15 ELECTIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER,
A DECISIVE FOLKETING MAJORITY WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY
BE HELD BY THE NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES. THIS APPARENT

CONTRADICTION REQUIRES SOME COMMENT AND A BRIEF REVIEW OF RECENT DANISH HISTORY.

2. THE LARGEST SINGLE PARTY OF SUCH A NON-SOCIALIST MAJORITY WILL PROBABLY BE MOGENS GLISTRUP'S PROGRESS PARTY WHICH PROMISES TO EMERGE AS DENMARK'S SECOND-LARGEST PARTY AFTER THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SOME SORT OF COALITION, OR AN EFFECTIVE WORKING ARRANGEMENT, OF ALL THE PARTIES TO THE RIGHT OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAS BEEN DUBBED THE "BLACK COALITION" BY THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. THIS WAS IN RESPONSE TO THE LABEL OF "RED COALITION" THAT THE NON-SOCIALISTS USED TO DESCRIBE THE FORMAL COMPACT BETWEEN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND THE SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY (SF) IN THE 1966-68 PERIOD. (CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE SF, WITHOUT A FORMAL UNDERSTANDING, WAS RESUMED BY ANKER JORGENSEN IN HIS FIRST GOVERNMENT, 1971-73)

3. ON THE FACE OF IT, SUCH A "BLACK COALITION" SHOULD HAVE PROVIDED LIBERAL PRIME MINISTER POUL HARTLING'S GOVERNMENT (1973-75) WITH A COMFORTABLE MAJORITY. IT SHOULD ALSO HAVE ALLOWED HIM EASILY TO RECONSTITUTE SUCH A GOVERNMENT AFTER THE JANUARY 1975 ELECTIONS, WHICH ULTIMATELY BROUGHT ANKER JORGENSEN TO POWER FOR THE SECOND TIME.

4. EVEN A CASUAL OBSERVER OF THE DANISH POLITICAL SCENE, HOWEVER, WILL KNOW THAT THE NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ACHIEVE SUFFICIENT COOPERATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AMONG THEMSELVES TO FORM A GOVERNMENT. NOR ARE THEY LIKELY TO DO SO AFTER THIS YEAR'S ELECTIONS. WHY IS THIS?

5. FIRST, AND LESS IMPORTANT, HAS BEEN THE SWING OF THE RADICAL PARTY BACK FROM COLLABORATION WITH THE LIBERALS AND THE CONSERVATIVES TO THE RADICALS' TRADITIONAL CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS. BUT, BASICALLY, THE FAILURE OF THE DANISH CENTER-RIGHT TO ACHIEVE THE GOVERNMENT THAT THEIR NUMBERS WARRANT HAS BEEN THE CONTINUING UNACCEPTABILITY OF MOGENS GLISTRUP. IN OTHER WORDS, WHEN FACED WITH A CHOICE, THE "REASONABLE" NON-SOCIALIST PARTIES HAVE CONSISTENTLY OPTED FOR A GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS RATHER THAN TO GET IN BED WITH GLISTRUP.

6. THE REPORT IN DEPTH MADE ON GLISTRUP AND HIS PARTY IN EARLY 1975 (REF B) LARGELY REMAINS APPLICABLE. ALL THE OTHER PARTIES IN FOLKETING HAVE REGARDED GLISTRUP

AND HIS FOLLOWERS AS IRRESPONSIBLE AND UNRELIABLE WHOSE COMMITMENTS TO OTHER PARLIAMENTARIANS--WHICH ARE REGARDED AS SACRED IN DENMARK EVEN BY THE PARTIES OF THE FAR LEFT--CANNOT BE TRUSTED. OVER THE PAST YEAR, HOWEVER, GLISTRUP HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO MAKE HIMSELF AND HIS PARTY MORE ACCEPTABLE TO HIS CENTER-RIGHT COLLEAGUES.

7. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE HAS MOVED HIS PARTY'S STAND DRAMATICALLY FROM THE SURRENDER TELEPHONE RECORDING IN RUSSIAN TO CLER SUPPORT FOR A NEW SIX-YEAR DANISH DEFENSE AGREEMENT TO BE FUNDED AT LEVELS HIGH ENOUGH TO SATISFY FULLY DANISH NATO COMMITMENTS. ALTHOUGH IN THE EYES OF MOST OF HIS PARLIAMENTARY COLLEAGUES SOME OF HIS POSITIONS REMAIN SILLY (SUCH AS THE ABOLITION OF THE INCOME TAX AND DISREGARD OF ANY INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS BY DANISH FISHERMEN), HE HAS MADE GAINS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITH SOME OF THE SMALLER CENTER-RIGHT PARTIES. TO VARYING DEGREES, THE CENTER-DEMOCRATS, CONSERVATIVES AND CHRISTIANS HAVE INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO COLLABORATE WITH HIM AND HIS FOLLOWERS.

8. THE MAIN STUMBLING BLOCK TO SUCH CENTER-RIGHT, ACROSS-THE-BOARD, COOPERATION REMAINS POUL HARTLING'S LIBERALS. GLISTRUP THE MAN AND HIS "MIND-LESS" PROTEST MOVEMENT REMAIN AN ANATHEMA TO HARTLING. ONLY LAST NIGHT ON TELEVISION, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, HE REPEATED HIS CONSISTENT POSITION OF REFUSING ANY KIND OF WORKING ARRANGEMENT WITH GLISTRUP, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT ON MANY ISSUES THE TWO PARTIES WILL BE VOTING THE SAME.

9. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, DIFFERENCES OF OPINION WITHIN THE LIBERALS ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY SHOULD COOPERATE WITH EITHER GLISTRUP ON THEIR RIGHTS OR THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ON THEIR LEFT, AND THERE CONTINUE TO BE PRESSURES FOR THE PARTY TO REACH OUT IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. FURTHERMORE, HARTLIN WHO IS NOW 62, MAY SEE A "BLACK COALITION" AS THE ONLY WAY TO GAIN A SHOT AT RETURNING AS DENMARK'S PRIME MINISTER.

10. UNLESS, HOWEVER, GLISTRUP CAN ACQUIT HIMSELF OF THE CHARGES OF TAX FRAUD AGAINST HIM AND DO MORE TO SATISFY OTHER PARTY LEADERS OF HIS RESPONSIBILITY, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT A "BLACK COALITION" WILL OCCUR SOON. EVEN FROM HIS OWN VIEWPOINT, GLISTRUP MUST PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY IN BURNISHING HIS IMAGE OF "RESPECTABILITY." FOR, TO THE EXTENT THAT HE BECOMES

RESPECTABLE HE WILL INEVITABLY UNDERMINE THE WIDESPREAD
"PROTEST" SUPPORT WHICH HAS HERETOFORE FUELED HIS
POPULARITY.

10. NOR, CAN WE SEE THAT A "BLACK COALITION" WOULD BE
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IN THE INTEREST EITHER OF DENMARK OR THE UNITED STATES.
GLISTRUP HAS YET TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HIS INCREASED
INFLUENCE, EITHER IN DANISH INTERNAL OR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
WOULD BE A STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF REASON OR
RESPONSIBILITY. FURTHERMORE, A "BLACK COALITION" WOULD
ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE THE EFFECT OF PUSHING THE SOCIAL
DEMOCRATS INTO CLOSER COLLABORATION WITH THE PARTIES TO ITS LEFT.
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